

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A fuel manifold for the direct injection of fuel into an internal combustion engine comprising a head provided with a number of cylinders, a number of injectors, each of which is connected to the fuel manifold and is adapted directly to inject the fuel into a respective cylinder, and an intake manifold which is connected to the head in order to supply fresh air to the cylinders,

wherein the fuel manifold ~~being characterised in that~~ it is formed by a single monolithic body which is made ~~[[from]]~~ of thixotropic aluminum by means of a pressure die casting process and comprises a supply duct adapted to distribute the fuel under pressure to the injectors, and a flange disposed laterally to the supply duct, the flange having a plurality of through holes in order to be secured by respective screws to the head of the engine and comprising a number of coupling members, each of which is adapted to bring a respective cylinder into communication with the intake manifold;

the supply duct includes a main cylindrical tubular channel having two opposite open ends, one of which is used to supply the fuel under pressure and the other is closed by a screw cap;

in the vicinity of the end closed by the screw cap, the main cylindrical tubular channel has a first opening adapted to receive a pressure regulator and a second opening adapted to receive a pressure sensor.

Claim 2 (currently amended): A fuel manifold as claimed in claim 1, in which the flange comprises a substantially plane plate which extends laterally to the supply duct from a median portion of this supply duct, each coupling member comprising a tubular body which rises from the plate perpendicularly with respect to the plane in which ~~[[this]]~~ said plate lies.

Claim 3 (currently amended): A fuel manifold as claimed in claim 2, in which a lower surface of the plate is ~~plane~~ planar and has a relatively very small surface roughness so that it can be coupled in a leak-tight manner with a corresponding upper surface of the head.

Claim 4 (currently amended): A fuel manifold as claimed in claim 2, in which a series of reinforcing ribs are provided and are disposed perpendicularly with respect to the plane in which the plate lies and ~~involve~~ are on both the plate and the supply duct.

Claim 5 (original): A fuel manifold as claimed in claim 4, in which the flange has a series of raised zones, via each of which a respective through hole is provided for the passage of a screw for connection to the head of the engine.

Claim 6 (original): A fuel manifold as claimed in claim 5, in which some reinforcing ribs start from the raised zones.

Claim 7 (original): A fuel manifold as claimed in claim 4, in which some reinforcing ribs start from the tubular bodies.

Claim 8 (currently amended): A fuel manifold as claimed in claim 1, in which the supply duct is formed by a main cylindrical tubular channel from which a series of further secondary cylindrical tubular channels, disposed perpendicularly with respect to the main cylindrical tubular duct, lead, each said secondary cylindrical tubular channel being adapted to house a respective injector in a leak-tight manner.

Claims 9 and 10 (cancelled)